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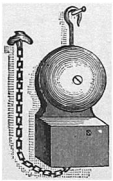
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### HINTS AND NOTIONS.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

OUR subscribers are at liberty to ask us for information at any time upon matters properly falling within the sphere of this journal. When the information sought is of value to the general reader it will be given in this department. If it is of sufficient scope to warrant it a special article will be prepared, and if necessary engravings illustrating the subject made for the body of the magazine. If of minor or merely personal import such queries will always, when possible, be referred to competent authority and answered by mail. We are always happy to receive suggestions upon matters in which our readers may feel interested.

**Distemper Paints.** "R. J. F., Knoxville," Tenn. Your mistake is in doing stenciling with color ground in Japan thinned with turps. To have a color in distemper work, sharp, and that will not spread, mix as much color as required to a stiff paste with linseed oil. When well mixed or ground lay the color on a heavy, coarse brown paper for an hour or more. This will absorb the fatty and sticking portion of the oil and prevent any danger of spreading. It may then be thinned with turpentine to the proper consistence.

**Painting on Gilded Panels.** "Decorator, Meadville, Pa." There is no preparation needed to paint in oils on a gilded panel. No mediums are required, the ordinary colors being used unmodified. If required to dry flat and remain so, the colors are mixed with turpentine and left unvarnished. If the shiny look of oils are to be retained they are slightly diluted with boiled oil, and varnished with white hard varnish when dry.

N. B. B., New-Bedford. In complaining of the paint cracking you do not mention whether every coat is dead color; a gloss coat is very deceiving, often appearing dry when it is otherwise; in which case, when the subsequent coats are put on, it goes into color cracks which are apt to extend to the surface. Possibly you have applied the coats too heavy. Paint manufacturers are often blamed for the errors of the painter.

**Wall Panels.** "Mrs. K., Buffalo, N.Y." The decoration of the Panels should be in keeping with the wall paper patterns. It may be much more pronounced than those, but still it must not assert itself. You must be ready to sacrifice an admirable wall design if you have nothing suitable to go with it.

**Gilding Mahogany.** "T. R. B. Elmira, N.Y." We are not surprised at your failure to gild mahogany with gold leaf; shell gold should be used.

**Conventional Treatment of Floral Forms.** In fresco and carved designs of flowers treated conventionally, the introduction of the many types is apt to induce a crowded effect, which wholly disappears, even with the same amount of actual work, if only one or two flowers in varied aspects are introduced. This allows of freer and more lively and vigorous treatment. There is no end of variety in division of leaves, aided in the case of fresco by telling shadows; and in both carving and fresco by variations of form and skillful grouping in circling and semi-circling divisions, care being taken that the essential form is not varied, and that a family likeness pervades the whole.

**Gilding Leather Upholstered Coverings.** The best plan for gilding these coverings is to follow the process adopted by bookbinders, to whose inventiveness, by the way, is due the streak work of the Elizabethan period. The parts to be gilt are covered with a layer of white of egg, and then with a film of gold leaf, on pressing on this with a heated brass tool with device at the end of handle, or with ornament continuous on a revolving wheel, or placing the leather on a block of brass attached to the upper bed of a press, and on which is the sunk design, a large number of borders or devices in the centre of diaper work, or otherwise disposed, are quickly ornamented.

**An Off-hand Thought.** Whilst decorative designers are free to avail themselves of the suggestive ideas provided from classic and renaissance sources, they must aim in catching in their renderings "the spirit of the times." What is this spirit?

**To Make Varnish Adhere to Metal.** Add five hundredths per cent. of boric acid to the varnish.

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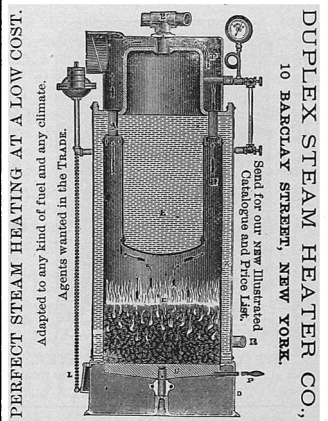
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**Boule Work.** The pieces of tortoise shell are first dipped in hot water, then have their edges filed, and these are heated by water, and the edges joined by the gelatine, under a slight pressure. The patterns are formed by a fine watch spring saw. The pattern cut out of one slice is reversed and fitted to the matrix of another. They are set in the interstices of the wood with glue and pressure. Fillings of the material are scraped into any hardening apertures. Ebony, pearl shells, ivory and white metal, making further elements of decoration, are added in small quantities.

**Glass Painting.** For painting in water colors on glass, ground glass is preferable. Colors are specially prepared for the purpose. The outline should be made with a pen charged with liquid color, containing a small portion of oxgall, and a slight coating of mastic varnish should be given before working on it. Each layer of color should be coated with enamel varnish to prevent the succeeding color rubbing up or wiping off the previous coat. Enamel varnish is made expressly for glass painting.

**Paris Varnish for Fancy Woods.** Dissolve one part good shellac in three to four parts alcohol of ninety-two per cent. in water bath; add distilled water until a curdling mass separates out, which is to be collected and pressed between linen, the liquid being afterwards filtered through paper, and all the alcohol separated by distillation from the water bath. The resin remaining is dried and then dissolved in double its weight of alcohol, and is ready for application.

**Variegated Marble Effects.** These may be produced by spreading damp plaster on canvas, and inserting in labyrinthine forms a number of intertwined silk threads of different colors. These threads discharge their dyes and are then removed, leaving colored vein markings. Clouded and other effects may be added with feather and brush on the plaster drying, softening the colors with a blender or badger.

**Composition Ornament.** In the use of composition ornament on furniture the danger is that of employing it to excess, or rendering it too diffusive. Numerous and twisted convoluted lines force attention before the article itself. There is a great difference between "ornamented" and ornamental construction, the latter, if well designed, has structural expression.

**To Gild Oak and other Hard Woods.** It is sometimes required to gild the hard wood so as to show the grain. The surface is to be glass papered down and two coats of strong parchment size followed by oil gold size applied. The gold can be laid on when this is nearly dry and will brush off bright.

**Cherry Stain.** Mix together, by stirring, one quart of spirits of turpentine, one pint of Japan, one pound of Venetian red ground in oil, and two ounces of dry burnt amber. Apply with a brush and wipe off with a cloth. Finish with one coat of shellac and two coats of varnish.

**Oil Gilding on Wood.** The wood is prepared with white lead and linseed oil, or two or three coats of clear glue preparation. Over this is laid the size, a mixture of boiled linseed oil and ochre, and the leaf is applied when the surface is nearly hard. The process does not allow of burnishing.

**Minute Shades of Color.** The power to distinguish between minute shades of color is very rare, although of late years an infinite diversity and minute division of primary color into thousands of delicate shadings has been applied to textile materials.

**Mother of Pearl Coating on Wood or Glass.** This coating consists of a cold solution of salt with dextrine laid on as thin as possible with a broad soft brush. The surface of the glass must be previously prepared with an alcoholic shellac solution.

**Japan Designs on Glass.** One side of the glass is to be covered with several layers of gold leaf by means of a gelatine solution, the gelatine being boiled in water, and on this backing the design is traced with a needle and coated with black japan.

**Gold Lac for Metal.** A gold lac remarkable for its hardness and beautiful color, consists of a clear shellac solution mixed with picric and almost half the amount of crystallized boracic acid, the latter being previously dissolved in alcohol.

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